

1-5 (canceled).

6 (currently amended). A method of distinguishing an auditory alert signal from a background of one or more other auditory signals, the method comprising:

providing a selected alert signal for a subject at a first apparent location that is initially angularly displaced relative to a selected axis by a selected first azimuthal angle ϕ_1 ; and

causing the first apparent location of the alert signal to change to a second apparent location that is angularly displaced relative to the selected axis by a selected second azimuthal angle ϕ_2 , where $|\phi_1 - \phi_2| \geq 15^\circ$, within a selected time interval having a duration Δt lying in a range [[0.01]] 0.1 sec $\leq \Delta t \leq$ [[1]] 0.5 sec; and

permitting a subject to distinguish the change of the alert signal from the first apparent location to the second apparent location and to thereby distinguish the alert signal from at least one background signal having an apparent location that does not change.

7 (original). The method of claim 6, further comprising allowing said apparent location of said alert signal to change to a third apparent location that is angularly displaced relative to said selected axis by a selected third azimuthal angle ϕ_3 where $|\phi_2 - \phi_3| \geq 15^\circ$, within a second selected time interval.

8 (currently amended). The method of claim [[6]] 7, further comprising choosing at least one of said first azimuthal angle ϕ_1 , said second azimuthal angle ϕ_2 and said third azimuthal angle [[ϕ_1]] ϕ_3 so that at least one of the following constraints is satisfied: $|\phi_1 - \phi_2| \geq 30^\circ$ and $|\phi_2 - \phi_3| \geq 30^\circ$.

9 (original). The method of claim 6, further comprising choosing at least one of said first angle ϕ_1 and said second angle ϕ_2 to lie in a combined azimuthal angle range given by $-120^\circ \leq \phi \leq -15^\circ$ plus $15^\circ \leq \phi \leq 120^\circ$.

10 (original). The method of claim 6, further comprising causing said change from said first apparent location to said second apparent location to occur continuously in said selected time interval.

11 (original). The method of claim 6, further comprising causing said change from said first apparent location to said second apparent location to include at least one discontinuous change within said selected time interval.

12-13 (canceled).

14 (currently amended). The method of claim 6, further comprising providing said alert signal through first and second earphones positioned adjacent to first and second ears, respectively, of [[a]] said subject.

15-31 (canceled).

32 (currently amended). A system for distinguishing an auditory alert signal from a background of one or more other auditory signals, the system comprising:
an alert signal source that:

provides a selected alert signal for a subject at a first apparent location that is initially angularly displaced relative to a selected axis by a selected by a first azimuthal angle ϕ_1 : and

causes the first apparent location of the alert signal to change to a second apparent location that is angularly displaced relative to the selected axis by a selected second azimuthal angle ϕ_2 , where $|\phi_1 - \phi_2| \geq 15^\circ$, within a selected time interval having a duration Δt lying in a range [[0.01]] 0.1 sec $\leq \Delta t \leq$ [[1]] 0.5 sec, whereby the subject can distinguish the change of the alert signal from the first apparent location to the second apparent location and thereby distinguish the alert signal from at least one background signal having an apparent location that does not change.

33 (currently amended). The system of claim 32, wherein said alert signal source:

allows said apparent location of said alert signal to change to a third apparent location that is angularly displaced relative to said selected axis by a selected third azimuthal angle ϕ_3 , where $|\phi_2 - \phi_3| \geq 15^\circ$, within a second selected time interval having a duration Δt lying in a range $[[0.01]] \underline{0.1} \text{ sec} \leq \Delta t \leq [[1]] \underline{0.5} \text{ sec}$.

34 (currently amended). The system of claim $[[32]] \underline{33}$, wherein at least one of said first azimuthal angle ϕ_1 , said second azimuthal angle ϕ_2 and said third azimuthal angle ϕ_3 is chosen so that at least one of the following constraints is satisfied $|\phi_1 - \phi_2| \geq 30^\circ$ and $|\phi_2 - \phi_3| \geq 30^\circ$.

35 (original). The system of claim 32, wherein at least one of said first angle ϕ_1 and said second angle ϕ_2 is chosen to lie in a combined azimuthal angle range given by $-120^\circ \leq \phi \leq -15^\circ$ plus $15^\circ \leq \phi \leq 120^\circ$.

36 (original). The system of claim 32, wherein said change from said first apparent location to said second apparent location occurs continuously in said selected time interval.

37 (original). The system of claim 32, wherein said change from said first apparent location to said second apparent location includes at least one discontinuous change within said selected time interval.

38-39 (canceled).

40 (currently amended). The system of claim 32, wherein said alert signal is provided through first and second earphones positioned adjacent to first and second ears, respectively, of [[a]] said subject.

41-46 (canceled).